

# ANC leader plans return here in fall to aid Indians

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By Benny Evangelista  
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South African apartheid fighter Nelson Mandela, the man who has become the living embodiment of the struggle for racial equality, thrilled a roaring, adoring Oakland

*Just to Bay Area*  
Coliseum crowd yesterday when he said he will return in October to help improve the lives of Native Americans.

But a scheduling snafu that cut short the eighth and final stop of Mandela's history-making U.S. tour left behind a



## MANDELA IN AMERICA

mix of frustration, disappointment — and understanding — from people who wanted to see Mandela and his wife at other events in Oakland and Berkeley.

In his final major public ap-

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pearance before flying off to Ireland, the 71-year-old African National Congress deputy president brought tears of joy from many of the nearly 60,000 people who packed the Coliseum and gave him and his wife Winnie Mandela a tumultuous three-minute standing ovation welcoming him to the Bay Area.

"We admire you, we respect you and, above all, we love you," Mandela told the crowd.

In a clear and deliberate voice, the 71-year-old Mandela touched on the basic messages he has brought to each of the eight cities on his 12-day tour: maintaining U.S. economic sanctions against the white-minority South African government and helping fund the African National Congress' fight against that country's racist apartheid system.

“Our people are determined to fight until victory is achieved,” said Mandela, who appeared energetic and fresh despite his grueling, tiring schedule. “We shall not turn back.”

“Our people demand democracy. Our country, which continues to bleed and suffer pain, needs democracy. Our country stands on the threshold of fundamental change, but we still have a long road to travel before reaching our destination.”

Mandela added a new theme to his message yesterday — the plight of Native Americans.

He said he had received letters describing conditions of Native Americans, and they “have left me very disturbed.”

Mandela said he would have liked to see those conditions himself, “but unfortunately my schedule is very tight. But I can assure the leaders of the American Indian community that I will return in October.”

Mandela started the day in Los Angeles, where he arose for an early morning walk near his downtown hotel, a meeting with the Los Angeles Times editorial board and a meeting with entertainer Stevie Wonder.

His motorcade left the hotel about 9:40 p.m., and took a circuitous route through the streets of Los Angeles.

Mandela's Trump Shuttle plane touched down at noon at Oakland International Airport.

With a crowd of about 300 invited guests gathered in a secluded taxiway, Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson greeted Mandela along with San Francisco Mayor Art Agnos, who carried a young boy piggyback on his shoulders.

“Our visit to the United States of America has succeeded beyond our wildest dreams,” Mandela said. “We came here as fighters determined to eliminate apartheid.”

From the airport, Mandela traveled by motorcade to the Coliseum, passing clusters of horn-honking, flag-waving people along Hegenberger Road.

While Mandela took time to rest, the stadium crowd was entertained by a mix of music, from gospel to jazz.

"Through Mr. Mandela, we'll get our first-class citizenship when he gets his freedom," said 84-year-old Jennie Lander of Miramar, as she waited in the front row.

Assembly Speaker Willie Brown of San Francisco implored the crowd to wave over their heads "a dead president," referring to pictures on U.S. currency, and donate more funds to the ANC.

Actor Harry Belafonte, noting that the Eastbay was the birthplace of the movement against apartheid, said, "It is fitting that his last day should be spent here."

Then Congressman Ron Dellums, D-Oakland, whipped the crowd into a frenzy, invoking the names of anti-apartheid leaders like the late Alameda County Supervisor John George and the late Congressman Mickey Leland.

"Stand up and give yourself a hand," Dellums said, as the crowd did. "We've made history."

When Dellums introduced Mandela, the crowd rose in a stirring frenzy of clapping, jumping and crying as Mandela appeared on stage with a broad smile and his right fist raised in the air.

"Once more we've received an overwhelming tribute of solidarity," said Mandela, who also referred to the efforts made by John George — as well as those of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and civil rights fighter Fannie Lou Hamer.

"It is clear beyond any reasonable doubt that the unbanning of our organization came as a result of the pressure exerted on the apartheid regime by yourselves," he said.

**'Our country stands on the threshold of fundamental change, but we still have a long road to travel before reaching our destination.'**

**— Nelson Mandela**

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Mandela was shaded from the hot sun by an umbrella and stopped occasionally to sip from a cup of Pepsi. Ironically, an advertisement for Coca-Cola — which the ANC objects to because it does business in South Africa — was above the stage on the stadium scoreboard.

Despite the heat and reports that the U.S. tour had tired him, Mandela said he felt rejuvenated by the enthusiastic crowd, saying he felt like he did when he was 35.

"If I feel so young, if I feel like **an old battery** that has been recharged, it is the people of the United States who are responsible for this," he said. "It is you,

the people of Oakland, the people of the Bay Area who have given my delegation the strength to go back and continue the struggle."

In a late afternoon press conference in the Oakland Convention Center ballroom, Mandela gave few other details about his return to the United States in October.

"We are going away from here feeling strong and hopeful that millions of people support our cause," said Mandela, with his wife, Winnie, at his side.

"I and my delegation are extremely excited about the manner in which we have been welcomed by the people of this country . . . . It can be truly said that the struggle against apartheid is the issue that has united people of different views not only throughout the United States but throughout the world."

The Mandelas hugged supporters and posed for pictures with police officers during an emotional airport farewell in which no one seemed to want to say goodbye.

Before entering a twin-engine private jet bound for Dublin, Ireland, with a fueling stop in northern Canada, Mandela was asked what was the greatest part of his trip.

"No single thing," Mandela said. "Just the response of the people as a whole."